



Domestic Abuse

**Understanding Domestic Abuse and
Safeguarding Families and Children.**

Stella Anaxagorou- Domestic Abuse Lead for
Education



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Outline

- Defining Domestic Abuse
- Domestic Abuse and Children
- Support for Families at risk

Quiz

- How many children experience Domestic Abuse in the UK

a) 1 in 10
b) 1 in 8
c) 1 in 5

- 2) What percentage of children in families where there is Domestic Abuse have lived with the abuse their whole life?

a) 33%
b) 18%
c) 41%



- 3) An estimated number of how many babies under one year of age are currently living with Domestic Abuse in the UK?

a) 59,000
b) 39,000
c) 24,000



- 4) Women in particular are at greater risk of Homicide living with the perpetrator than having fled from the perpetrator

a) True
b) False

Language and Terminology

Domestic Violence 'Domestic Abuse' 'Intimate Partner Abuse' 'Relationship Abuse' are ALL interchangeable

GBV/VAWG

Any gender can experience or perpetrate DA but generally men are known to use more extreme and dangerous forms of abuse. Multiple statistics and studies show that women are disproportionately affected by male perpetrated violence.

According to official statistics, 38% of female victims of homicide were killed by a partner or ex-partner compared with 4% of male victims.

Studies and research also highlight differences in the type of abuse used, and in the way abusers and victims present.

Pronouns; '***she, her, hers***' for victim '***he, him, his***' for perpetrator- Interchangeable.



- WHO is involved
- WHAT does it involve
- WHY does it happen

What is Domestic Abuse

*‘any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling,
coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse
between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been,
intimate partners or family members regardless of gender
or sexuality.’*

Types of Abuse- chat box

- Emotional Name calling, belittling, verbal, shaming, undermining, bullying.
- Psychological Manipulation- gas lighting,
- Physical Hitting, punching, using objects- non contact- withholding medication, starvation, holding hostage.
- Sexual Rape, sexual assault, **revenge porn**, forcing to partake in sexual activities- sexual belittling.
Forced Pregnancy
- Financial Restricting access to money, theft, forcing work, forcing to stop work, debt.
- Coercive Control Any acts / patterns of behaviour designed to **control, frighten** and **intimidate**. Coercive control can be both physical or non physical, **overt and covert**.



The impact of abuse- chat box

Mental/ cognitive

- Memory loss
- Mental Illness
- Hyper vigilance / arousal
- Burn out

Physical

- Bruises
- Weight loss
- Weight Gain
- Broken bones
- Muscular damage
- Internal damage
- Frequent headaches
- Nausea
- Contracting STI's
- Death

Social

- Homelessness
- ASBOS
- Immigration
- Finances
- Employment
- Education
- Parenting
- Relationships

Emotional

- Low confidence/self esteem
- Feelings of guilt / self blame.
- Reduced self worth
- Difficulty in trusting



Children as victims/ harm/risk

Domestic Abuse Act 2021:

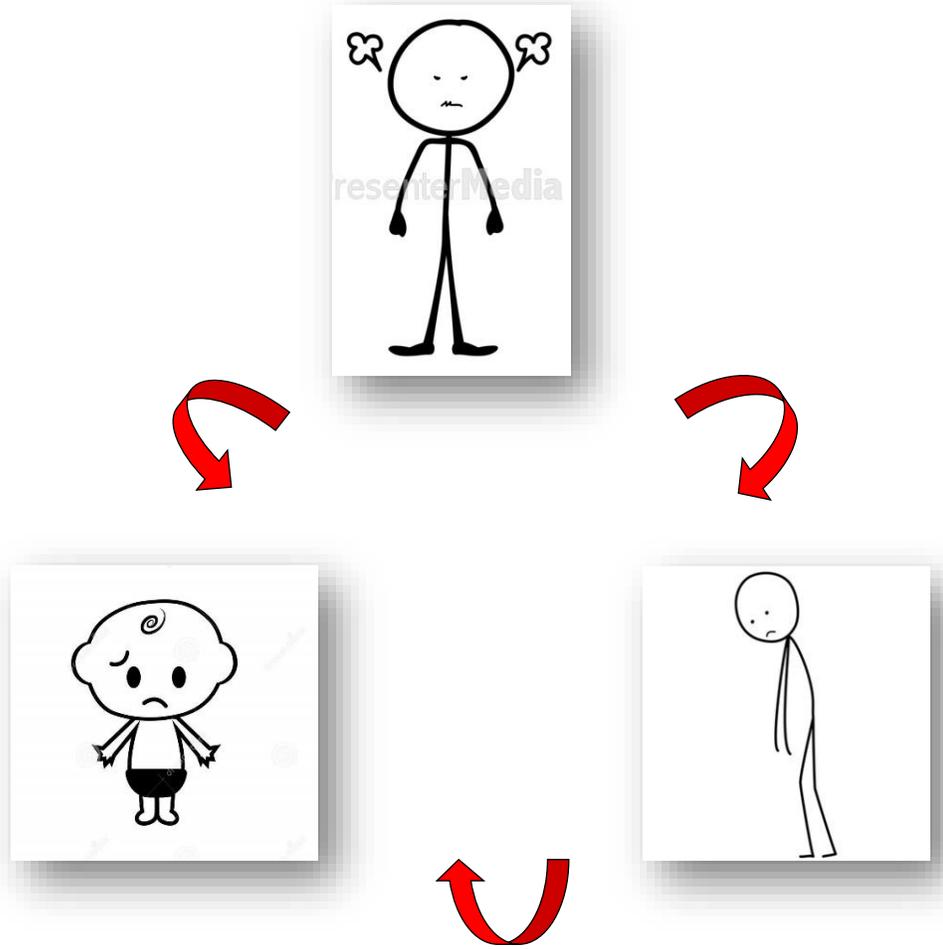
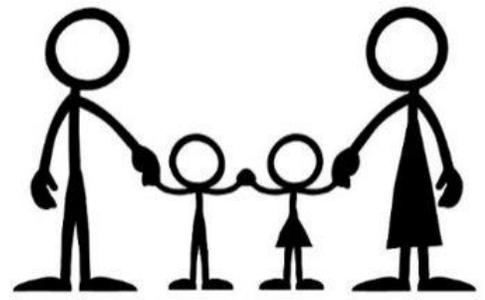
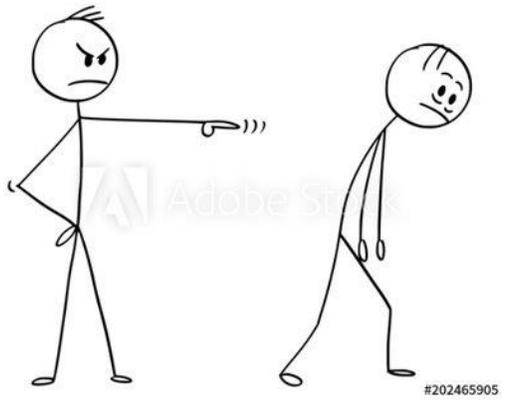
Children as victims of domestic abuse

(1) This section applies where behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is domestic abuse.

(2) Any reference in this Act to a victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child who—

(a) sees or hears, or experiences the effects of, the abuse,

How Domestic Abuse effects the family unit



Categories of Harm

Emotional

*Witnessing domestic abuse is considered child abuse under the Children Act 1989, which now includes in its definition of harm 'impairment suffered from **seeing or hearing** the ill treatment of another'.*

'What can this teach children?' Q

Physical

Trying to intervene during physical assault, weapons or objects being used and/or being caught in the crossfire

Neglect

Where a child's emotional and or physical needs are not being met leaving the child/ren in a state of vulnerability

1

Father attacked mother and left the house in a panic. Mother is injured and on the floor in pain. Children are upstairs in their bedrooms.

2

Father verbally abuses mother. Mother is crying and drinking alcohol. The children see their mother drinking and crying.

3

Mother throws a remote control at father whilst he watches television. His 4 YO is sat beside him on the couch.

4

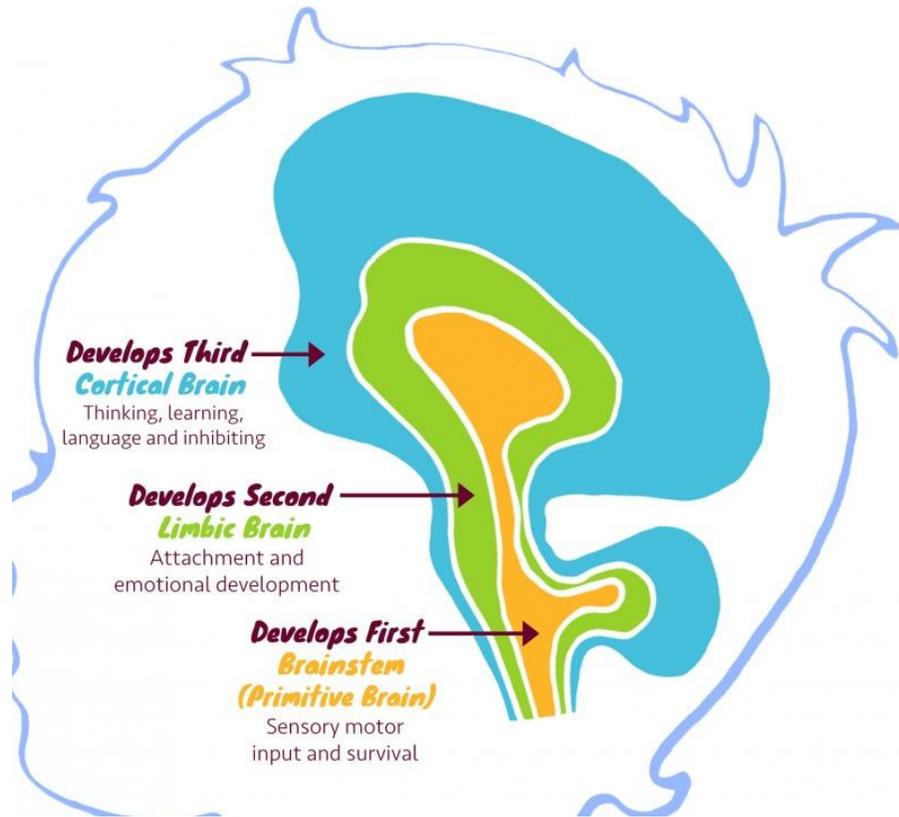
A teenage boy gets into many fights at school and is often verbally hostile to towards girls. When the school investigate, they discover that there is a history of domestic abuse in the family.

The impact of DA on children

Numerous studies show that children who are exposed to the Domestic Abuse of a parent often have greater behavioral and emotional problems compared to other children.

Neurological studies have also shown that exposure to trauma in relation Domestic Abuse can also affect the way the brain works.

The single best predictor of children becoming either perpetrators or victims of domestic violence later in life is whether or not they grow up in a home where there is domestic abuse.



- Relational trauma can impact children’s nervous systems and brain development with over exposure to fear and threat.
- This can inhibit their ability to *learn*, feel *emotional safety* and form *healthy attachments* (Dr Steven Porges and polyvagal theory, Dr Gabor Mate, Professor David Shemmings)

[Understanding Trauma: Learning Brain vs Survival Brain - YouTube](#)

1) Physical

- 1) May have sustained injuries on areas of exposed flesh- in defence: head, face, arms
- 2) Signs of physical neglect i.e.: severe weight loss, weight gain, poor hygiene, frequent illness

2 Emotional/Behavioural

- 1) Sad, scared, confused,
- 2) In 'Survival brain' mode (hyper/hypo arousal)
- 3) Harmful behaviours towards a certain gender
- 4) Unhealthy attachment to parent
- 5) Fear of going home
- 6) No change

3 Education

- 1) May need to change schools
- 2) Find it difficult to concentrate due to lack of stability and uncertainty in personal life and being in 'survival brain'
- 3) May be absent for a period of time whilst trying to re-settle



4 Financial

- 1) Lack of money for food / clothes
- 2) No means for financial support if abusive parent was the sole financial provider
- 3) No means for financial support if protective parent has NRPF

5 Homelessness

- 1) Fled to a refuge in a new area.
- 2) Living with strangers and other children
- 3) Living with friends / relatives with very little space
- 4) Spending hours of the day at Housing Options / with social services / Police station.
- 5) Staying in a B&B / hotel for an uncertain time period
- 6) No stability for the next few weeks / months
- 7) Most likely will be moving between accommodations for a period of time.

Who can Help in a crisis?



Police

Health and Social Care

Housing

DA specialist services

Police:

Make an arrest, apply bail conditions, special schemes, prosecute, civil protective orders

Health and social care:

Support and safeguarding for vulnerable adults and children

Housing:

Provide emergency accommodation/refuge/ install home security

DA specialist service:**IDVA, Hestia, Victim Support, Southall black sisters**

Crisis intervention; risk assessment, safety plan, advice around rights and options. Advocacy and ongoing support to minimize risk and ensure safety. Referring and signposting for other areas of support

Contact the IDVA service on 07874 620954 or email: hidvas@hillingdon.gov.uk

(Never discuss any DA involvement/services with any alleged or convicted perpetrators)

Operation Encompass

Supporting children through key adults

- Allows schools to receive police notifications regarding DA incidents- the next school day
- This early intel provides schools with the insight to support children who may be exhibiting signs of trauma and/or emotional distress
- Enhance schools' early intervention and safeguarding strategies, ensuring the health and wellbeing of CYP.
- Enhanced multiagency and information sharing protocol
- Access to **free** support via child therapist

So Far....

There are now 89 live schools in the borough

84% of schools who provided feedback rated Encompass between 4-5 stars

LBH Targeted programs for CYP

- **Boys and young men's programmes (BYMP) | From age 8**
Structured group work programmes that use discussion, sport, cooking, the arts and individual reflection, to support the making of informed choices and raise self-esteem. Currently featuring the 'Being me' project for those who have experienced domestic abuse.
- **Girls and young women's programmes (GYWP) | From age 8**
Structured group work programmes that use discussion, sport, cooking, the arts and individual reflection, to support the making of informed choices and raise self-esteem. Currently featuring the 'Being me' project for those who have experienced domestic abuse.
- **Sexual health and wellbeing programmes | From age 11**
Support, information, advice and education on relationships and sexual health. Bespoke one-to-one offer and drop-in sessions available. Featuring bi-weekly LGBTQIA+ groups.
- **Emotional health and wellbeing programmes | From age 13**
Link confidential one-to-one counselling sessions delivered via face-to-face, video or telephone. featuring group counselling support.

[Targeted programmes for children and adolescents - Hillingdon Council](#)

DA Support for Schools

- Offer whole school training and awareness raising in addition to any other learning and support needs.
- Offer advice and guidance to schools regarding DA related disclosures or concerns (for children, parents and staff)
- Accept referrals from schools and provide IDVA support/ crisis intention
- Discuss referrals for signposting/referring to appropriate services
- Coordinate Operation Encompass in LBH and the training and registration of schools. Manage pathways between schools and police, monitor progress and development.

Contact Stella Anaxagorou on 07547951687 or email at sanaxagorou@hillingdon.gov.uk

(Please do not share details outside the school or discuss my involvement with any alleged or convicted perpetrators)

Who can Help?

- **National DA Helpline**- for advice and signposting to agencies such as IDVA and refuge- **tel: 0800 2000 247**
- **IDVA** (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor): **tel 07874 620954**
- **DA Lead for Education**- for advice/support for schools in Hillingdon: **tel 07547951687**
- **Children's Social care/ MASH**: **tel 01895 556 633**
- **The Police**- **Tel 999 for emergency and 101 for non emergency**
- **Victim Support**- All victims of crime- **tel: 0808 168 9291**
- **Hestia**- for lower risk DA survivors: **tel 020 7378 3100**
- **WGN**- for support around sexual violence and CSE: **tel 0808 801 0660**
- **Care2Talk**- For therapeutic support and counselling **tel 07564016066**
- **DVIP**- for support for women, children and perpetrators **<https://dvip.org/contact-us/>**
- **Gallop**- for LGBTQ+ victims of abuse **advice@galop.org.uk**
- **Respect/ Men's Advice Line** –for male victims of abuse **tel [0808 8010327](tel:08088010327)**



Thank You

